No Objection to Declassification in Full 2010/12/16 : LOC-HAK-558-11-2-8

HAK has seen

9383

~~SECRET~~/SPOKE

NSA Review Completed.

INFORMATION

April 16, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: John Holdridge

SUBJECT: Increased Enemy Main Force Threat in Northern I Corps

The threat posed by Communist Main Force units in the northern I Corps provinces of Quang Tri and Thua Thien has increased recently, particularly since April 1.

The NVA 27th Regiment moved through the DMZ into Quang Tri Province just south of the central DMZ area around April 1 and has since remained in that area. Several days later it was joined by elements of the NVA 246th Regiment. Further east, the NVA 31st Regiment moved south through the DMZ to the Con Thien-Gio Linh area on April 10, thus giving the enemy elements of three fresh regiments just south of the DMZ.

Following these movements, military action picked up measurably, including several sharp contacts north of Camp Carroll and the recent enemy attack on the Mai Loc Special Forces Camp. The 27th Regiment has lost well over 100 troops in heavy fighting so far this month.

In western Quang Tri Province, elements of the NVA 66th Regiment have also moved closer to allied installations. Last month, the 66th Regiment moved across the border from Laos but remained in a remote area of the province. Since April 9, however, elements of the regiment have been noted further east, and they now pose a definite threat to allied positions in western Quang Tri.

In Thua Thien Province, elements of two NVA regiments have been operating several miles east of the A Shau valley, and about fifteen miles southwest of Hue, ~~s~~respectively, since last month. Recently, the headquarters of one of these regiments left a base area in Laos and joined its battalions southwest of Hue.

MORI/CDF per
ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY 099109

~~SECRET~~/SPOKE

No Objection to Declassification in Full 2010/12/16 : LOC-HAK-558-11-2-8

No Objection to Declassification in Full 2010/12/16 : LOC-HAK-558-11-2-8

Comment: These deployments do not constitute any immediate threat to the cities of Hue and Quang Tri, but they do increase the threat to allied field positions and the GVN's pacification program in northern I Corps. They closely follow the recent enemy high point of March 31 and indicate that fairly stiff action will continue in the area for some time. More generally, the enemy deployments follow the withdrawal of the U. S. 3rd Marine Division during the last half of 1969. At present, only some U. S. Marine air units and U. S. Army ground forces, including elements of the 101st Airborne Division, are located in the area along with the ARVN 1st Division. As in the Delta, the Communists appear to be reacting to U. S. withdrawals by increasing their own troop strengths.

JHH:MFE:alh (4/16/70)

No Objection to Declassification in Full 2010/12/16 : LOC-HAK-558-11-2-8